

I recently read an article from Time Magazine discussing what is considered indecent and what is too much explicit content. Television(cable, satellite, digital, etc.) has gotten out of control. People argue that if we are offended then we should turn it off, but often the offense occurs without warning or necessity. So many programs insert scenes to appeal to specific audience or get a higher rating. This is mistake, the program would undoubtedly continue to do just as well without the scene. In the past, programs have been free of vulgar, violent, and sexual material and recieved great ratings (Cosby Show). Times change, but those who want to view more explicit material can still choose to view it through movies or paid television. I watched an episode of Law and Order, and was offended by the first minute of it's content - a sexual scene where everything but the actual act was being displayed. It is this type of content that we have to filter through - because sometimes it appears and other times it doesn't. I don't view Desperate Housewives because I can guess what kind of content they will be showing. It is other programs that you are viewing that are offensive when something out of the blue pops up in the dialogue or on the screen. Freedom of speech is an inherent right, but when you are broadcasting to the entire public, you have to consider all people's rights. The minimum standard should be what would be acceptable and not offensive to all people. Balancing content with context is ambiguous, but anyone can see the difference between Saving Private Ryan with its violence and language, and Married by America with a man licking whip cream off a stripper. The idea of what is decent is fairly black and white, and the story can still be as dramatic, funny, and gripping without the extra curse or nudity.